



Environmental health in China: Progress towards clean air and safe water

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Abstract:

Environmental risk factors, especially air and water pollution, are a major source of morbidity and mortality in China. Biomass fuel and coal are burned for cooking and heating in almost all rural and many urban households, resulting in severe indoor air pollution that contributes greatly to the burden of disease. Many communities lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and thus the risk of waterborne disease in many regions is high. At the same time, China is rapidly industrialising with associated increases in energy use and industrial waste. Although economic growth from industrialisation has improved health and quality of life indicators, it has also increased the release of chemical toxins into the environment and the rate of environmental disasters, with severe effects on health. Air quality in China's cities is among the worst in the world, and industrial water pollution has become a widespread health hazard. Moreover, emissions of climate-warming greenhouse gases from energy use are rapidly increasing. Global climate change will inevitably intensify China's environmental health troubles, with potentially catastrophic outcomes from major shifts in temperature and precipitation. Facing the overlap of traditional, modern, and emerging environmental dilemmas, China has committed substantial resources to environmental improvement. The country has the opportunity to address its national environmental health challenges and to assume a central role in the international effort to improve the global environment.

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Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change;
 surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Air Pollution, Food/Water Quality, Precipitation, Temperature

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Food/Water Quality: Pathogen

Geographic Feature: 

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Rural, Urban

Geographic Location: 

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Asia

Asian Region/Country: China

Health Impact: 

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Injury

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease: Cholera

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease (other): Typhoid;Dysentery

Intervention: 

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation: 

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: 

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Low Socioeconomic Status

Resource Type: 

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale: 

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content